

Safe, Healthy, and Active Streets Initiative (urgent and temporary)
Memorandum of Agreement Partnership

Initiative Overview

Salt Lake City Transportation, Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) Region Two, UDOT TravelWise/Move Utah, Get Healthy Utah, Utah Department of Health, Utah Transit Authority, the Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation, and Bike Utah are coming together in this *Urgent Phase* of the COVID-19 health crisis to maximize the utilization of our public roadways and resources and to better protect Utahn's health and safety. This effort will launch data-driven **temporary lane reallocations** on local and state roadways to provide pedestrians, bicyclists, and all residents more access to public space.

Temporary lane closures will create safe, low-stress, family-friendly networks that reduce crowding and gathering points that sometimes occur in parks and trailheads, which do not meet social distancing guidelines. If the stay-at-home directive for COVID-19 elongates and possibly extends into the summer, it may become even more important to have temporary public space allocations for residents.

Dramatic decreases in vehicle volumes make this the perfect opportunity for UDOT and local governments to **temporarily reallocate travel lanes** where appropriate. This collaborative initiative will address physical and mental health by providing opportunities for physical activity for all residents and improving safe connections to essential destinations during Utah's urgent response to COVID-19. Clear messaging and expectations regarding use will be relayed to all roadway users and stakeholders.

The development of this effort supports physical activity and transportation parameters in [Governor Herbert's Stay Safe, Stay Home Directive](#) and is in alignment with physical activity and transportation elements encouraged in the [Stay Safe, Stay Home Public Health Order](#) by Salt Lake County Mayor Wilson. The agencies indicated above will identify, plan, design and install the temporary reallocation of public roadway space to meet the immediate needs of residents as they relate to COVID-19.

This Stay Safe, Healthy and Active Streets initiative has immediate and positive impacts in the following areas:

- Physical Health
- Mental and Emotional Health
- Equitable Mobility

The **temporary nature of this initiative** (deploying construction-oriented traffic control devices and delineators) will keep it flexible and quickly responsive to changing needs regarding local stay-at-home orders and recommendations from the Mayors, Governor, and CDC.

Physical Health Overview

Travel lane allocations will encourage people to get out and recreate near their homes rather than consolidate at recreational trailheads or overwhelm existing trail facilities and parks. In short, this effort is a proactive way to give people opportunities to disperse and allow them to physically distance over a geographic area giving people the opportunity to be active in a responsible manner.

Full lane closures along a corridor make recreating or traveling with the elderly or young kids more appealing and safe. Additionally, in many locations, users are already stepping into roadways in order to socially distance themselves since many sidewalks are not sufficient in width to accommodate people passing. A goal of this effort is to provide family-friendly opportunities to recreate proximate to their residence and have a physical outlet to walk/run/bike/scooter while playgrounds and normal recreational centers are closed.

Mental Health Overview

Social distancing can be difficult for some people who are accustomed to being with friends and family and can overwhelm some who are experiencing mental health issues. This extra public space will be critical for people to practice social distancing and reduce exposure to COVID-19 while they are outside. Utilizing our public roadways in this manner will also help promote physical activity and emotional well-being which will help maintain our quality of life despite traditional outlets, such as gyms, playgrounds, recreational facilities, and ski resorts, not being available.

Equitable Mobility Overview

Utah's unemployment is projected to continue to rise in the coming weeks. As transit service is reduced (and people are apprehensive about riding transit), many essential workers may need alternate ways of getting to destinations. This Stay Safe, Stay Active Streets Initiative will help provide an opportunity to safely access critical destinations (transit, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.) without being reliant on an automobile or transit. This effort will drastically improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility and safety for users that are generally apprehensive of biking in the roadway.

Many people along the Wasatch Front live in apartment buildings or homes with limited indoor and private outdoor space. Access to public space can help ensure physical and emotional well-being for all residents. Our partners have collectively agreed to pursue projects that intentionally link socially and economically diverse neighborhoods so people can easily get to essential services and resources.

Project Summary

This effort demonstrates various levels of government and private organizations coming together to collaborate on issues in a moment of crisis. This initiative will help maximize the utilization of our public roadways and resources to protect public health and safety. With Utah's Stay Safe, Stay Home Directive, efforts like this will make it safer and easier for Utah residents to remain physically active and mentally healthy, while practicing all recommended social distancing guidelines.

Partners

As partners in the Safe, Healthy, and Active Streets Initiative, we, the undersigned, support the effort to **temporarily reallocate lanes** on appropriate and agreed to local and state roadways, providing low stress, family friendly access and public space for pedestrians, joggers, and bicyclists during the COVID-19 pandemic urgent phase.

Throughout this temporary initiative, Salt Lake City and UDOT will take the lead role in evaluating and monitoring several elements and outcomes. These elements and outcomes may include, but are not limited to; unsafe behaviors that put the lives of residents and users at risk, evolving changes to the local stay at home orders, and/or traffic volumes returning to pre-COVID19 numbers. As partners, we can quickly evolve to make refinements to the locations, length, and/or extent of this temporary initiative or to resume traditional vehicular traffic lanes.



Salt Lake City Transportation



UDOT Region Two



UDOT TravelWise/Move Utah



Utah Department of Health



Get Healthy Utah



Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation

 

Utah Transit Authority



Bike Utah

Other and Future Partners



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